

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Erin

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

U.S. Route 340/522

CITY, TOWN

Front Royal

☒ VICINITY OF

Seventh (J. Kenneth Robinson)

STATE

Virginia

CODE

51

COUNTY

Warren

CODE

187

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

**CATEGORY**

☐ DISTRICT

☒ BUILDING(S)

☐ STRUCTURE

☐ SITE

☐ OBJECT

**OWNERSHIP**

☐ PUBLIC

☒ PRIVATE

☐ BOTH

**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**

☐ IN PROCESS

☐ BEING CONSIDERED

**STATUS**

☒

OCCUPIED

☐ UNOCCUPIED

☐ WORK IN PROGRESS

**ACCESSIBLE**

☒

YES: RESTRICTED

☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED

☐ NO

**PRESENT USE**

☐ AGRICULTURE

☐ COMMERCIAL

☐ EDUCATIONAL

☐ ENTERTAINMENT

☐ GOVERNMENT

☐ INDUSTRIAL

☐ MILITARY

☐ MUSEUM

☐ PARK

☒ PRIVATE RESIDENCE

☐ RELIGIOUS

☐ SCIENTIFIC

☐ TRANSPORTATION

☐ OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Mr. & Mrs. William C. Trenary

STREET & NUMBER

Route 2, Box 718

CITY, TOWN

Front Royal

☐ VICINITY OF

STATE

Virginia 22630

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Warren County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Front Royal

STATE

Virginia

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS** (2) (See Continuation Sheet #1)

TITLE (1) Historic American Buildings Survey Inventory has this property been determined eligible ☒ Y ☐ N

DATE

1958

☒ FEDERAL ☐ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Library of Congress

CITY, TOWN

Washington

STATE

D.C.

## 7 DESCRIPTION

### CONDITION

☒ EXCELLENT  
☐ GOOD  
☐ FAIR

☐ DETERIORATED  
☐ RUINS  
☐ UNEXPOSED

### CHECK ONE

☒ UNALTERED  
☐ ALTERED

### CHECK ONE

☒ ORIGINAL SITE  
☐ MOVED DATE \_\_\_\_\_

### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Erin is conspicuously set on a small hill off Route 340 five miles north of Front Royal in Warren County. Erected in 1848, the wood-frame dwelling is a temple-form house with 1½-story flanking wings. It is embellished by impressive Greek Revival detailing on both its exterior and interior. Set on a stone foundation, the house is covered by a standing-seam sheet metal roof and beaded weatherboarding.

The west elevation is dominated by a two-story tetrastyle pedimented portico in the Greek Ionic order. The portico has unfluted columns, a full entablature, and a dentil cornice. It shelters a transom fan and sidelight frontispiece which retains its original paneled door. The frontispiece, with its Ionic pilasters, entablature, and carved swirls, is patterned after Plate 29 of Asher Benjamin's The Practice of Architecture, 1833. An 8/8 hung-sash window with flanking sidelights is over the entrance. The window is framed by a symmetrically molded architrave with turned corner blocks. The two-bay wings contain 6/6 hung-sash windows on the first story and small rectangular windows on the second story. The first-story windows are flanked by louvred shutters. The second-story shutters have been removed by a previous owner. The wings' north and south walls have stone exterior end chimneys, original to the house. Wood-frame pents flank the chimneys. The east pent on the south end contains a side entrance.

A dentil cornice embellishes the eaves course of the north and south elevations of the center section. Eight-over-eight, hung-sash windows with symmetrical architrave trim with turned corner blocks are used in the original portion of the center section. A rear addition has 6/6 hung-sash windows with similar trim. The southeast corner of the addition has a two-level porch added in the present century. A stone chimney breaks the roof line at the point where the house was extended to the east.

The interior of Erin contains exceptional Greek Revival detailing. The hall is dominated by an open-well spiral stair ornamented with stylized Greek-fret brackets, a molded handrail, and a heavy turned newel post. The balusters are also turned and are positioned two to a tread. A small niche is found in the plaster wall adjacent to the stair. The first-floor hall doorways have symmetrical architrave trim with rounded corner blocks. A simply molded baseboard runs the perimeter of the room.

The dining room, to the north of the hall, is the most elaborate room in the house. The north wall contains a Greek Revival-style mantel flanked by floor-length niches. The niches are said to be a later alteration, but their date is uncertain. The windows and doors are framed by symmetrical molded trim, capped by carved stylized anthemia. A box cornice completes the composition.

The parlor is located in the south wing. Less elaborate than the dining room, the doors and windows have symmetrical molded trim with corner blocks. The mantel is executed in a simple Greek Revival style with Doric pilasters and a plain entablature. The present kitchen, behind the hall, was originally the dining room. Its doors are embellished with symmetrical architrave trim with molded corner blocks. The room retains its rather plain Greek Revival mantel. The rear addition is used for storage. The second-floor rooms are very simple and have no particular distinguishing features.

Erin is fortunate in preserving a fine collection of outbuildings. Located to the rear of the house, the kitchen is a 1½-story random ashlar building covered by a gable roof. The first story contains a massive hearth and plastered walls. Approached by a ladder, the second story is also plastered. The law office is a one-story, wood-frame

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1848

BUILDER/ARCHITECT unknown

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Built for David Funsten in 1848, Erin is a sophisticated example of a three-part Classical Revival house, a form popular for country residences in Virginia throughout the first half of the 19th century. Native prototypes for the form include the late 18th-century Semple House in Williamsburg and Thomas Jefferson's first design for Monticello. However, the inspiration for these as well as many other of Virginia's three-part houses, such as Oak Lawn in Charlottesville, Fortsville in Southampton County, and Woodburn in Charles City County (all listed on the National Register of Historic Places), comes more from Palladian models than from more purely Classical ones. Erin, on the other hand, with its heroic Greek Ionic portico, represents a fusion of the Classical temple form with the three-part Palladian scheme. Erin's design may owe something to the native examples cited above as well as to the Virginia Classical Revival tradition fostered by Jefferson with his design of 1780 for the State Capitol; yet its form and details seem more closely akin to illustrations in popular architectural pattern books of the period. Indeed, Plate 75 of Minard Lafever's Modern Builder's Guide of 1833 is of a strikingly similar three-part house fronted by a Greek Ionic portico. Also, Erin's elaborate doorway is specifically extracted from a design in Asher Benjamin's The Practice of Architecture of 1833. The monumentality of Erin may be seen as a symbol of the builder's economic prosperity and his success as a Warren County lawyer.

The land on which Erin is built was inherited by David Funsten from his father, Oliver, in 1826. Oliver Funsten, born ca. 1782 in Ireland, was the progenitor of the family in Virginia. He came to Frederick County at the turn of the century and made his first purchase of land in 1801. He became a very successful merchant and also erected "substantial buildings of stone and brick" on the corners of the crossroads which developed into the town of White Post (Clarke County).<sup>1</sup> Funsten died in 1826, and his various land tracts were divided among his ten children. His will, recorded in Frederick County October 2, 1826, left "... to my son David my lands purchased of Jno. Smith and Steven Grub also the tract which I bought of Turner now rented to Jno. Thomson..."<sup>2</sup> The three tracts contained 163½, 124, and 212 acres and were purchased in 1814 and 1825.

David's inheritance and guardian accounts were handled by Richard K. Meade, were itemized for educational expenses, and included income from wheat, rye, and rent from farmlands. No building value was recorded on any of the inherited tracts. The educational expenses paid for Funsten's education at Princeton, from which he graduated in 1838. In 1844 David Funsten married Susan Meade, a daughter of David Meade of Millwood in Clarke County. In the same year the young lawyer was elected a member of the Virginia General Assembly. In 1848 Funsten built Erin, the Warren County land tax book noting the addition of \$2,000 for new buildings.

With its Classical overtones, the porticoed house was a favored design of the educated class in the 19th century; temples of all shapes, sizes, and materials sprang up throughout the United States, both in town and country. Funsten embellished his new house with highly

(see Continuation Sheet #1)

## 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Alexandria Deed Books 1853-1856 re: David Funsten.

Clarke County Land Tax Books 1836-1850.

Frederick County Records, 1827-1836.

Gold, Thomas D. History of Clarke County, Virginia. Berryville, Va. 1962.

Randolph, Howard S.F. The Ancestors and Descendants of Colonel David Funsten and his wife,

Susan Everard Meade. N.Y.: Knickerbocker Press, 1926.

Warren County Deed Books A,C,E,F.

(see Continuation Sheet #2)

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

QUADRANGLE NAME Stephens City, Va.

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 36 acres

UTM REFERENCES

QUADRANGLE SCALE: 1:24000

A 1 7 7 4 6 2 0 0 4 3 2 3 2 0 0

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C 1 7 7 4 5 7 4 0 4 3 2 2 5 3 0

E 1 7 7 4 5 9 9 0 4 3 2 3 3 0 0

B 1 7 7 4 6 0 8 0 4 3 2 2 9 6 0

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

D 1 7 7 4 5 5 6 0 4 3 2 2 6 0 0

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION Beginning at a point on E side of U.S. Route 340/522, about 925' N of intersection of said route with State Route 639 and at intersection with 600' contour; thence extending about 2600' NE along E side of 340/522; thence extending about 600' SE to 600' contour; thence following said contour about 3200' SW to point of origin.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Staff

ORGANIZATION

Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission

DATE

October 1979

STREET & NUMBER

221 Governor Street

TELEPHONE

(804) 786-3144

CITY OR TOWN

Richmond

STATE

Virginia 23219

## 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL     

STATE X

LOCAL     

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE

Tucker Hill, Executive Director  
Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission

DATE OCT 16 1979

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

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## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

Erin, Warren County, Virginia

CONTINUATION SHEET #1

ITEM NUMBER 6,7,8 PAGE 1

### 6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

- (2) Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Survey  
1968, 1979 State  
Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission  
221 Governor Street  
Richmond, Virginia 23219

### 7. DESCRIPTION

building distinguished by a simply executed tetrastyle portico. The structure retains its original 6/6 sash and east and west entries. Adjacent to the kitchen, the dairy is a one-story, wood-frame structure covered by an overhanging gable roof. The meat/smoke-house, a one-story log building, stands to the south of the kitchen and is covered by a new gable roof. North of the dairy, the chicken house is a one-story, wood-frame building covered by board-and-batten siding and a shed roof. A two-story, gable-roof, wood-frame granary clad with weatherboarding lies northeast of the main house, and a wooden post-and-rail fence connects the outbuildings.

RCC

### BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The nominated property provides a suitable setting for the main house and outbuildings as sited on a hill overlooking Route 340/522. This acreage includes only the property east of the road and consists of approximately 36 acres of the original Funsten house tract of 124 acres.

### 8. SIGNIFICANCE

stylized features that suggest the builder's urban tastes. Along with the handsomely executed stair, the house contains Classical-style niches and fine interior and exterior carving. The columned portico on the adjacent law office reinforces the impression of the owner's sophisticated tastes.

Funsten's occupancy of his new house was short-lived, the builder moving to Alexandria in 1853. By 1855 the property was sold to his brother-in-law, John Meade of "Valley View." The property is first referred to as "Erin" in the Warren County Land Tax Book of 1852. The succession of names on the deeds indicates that the family still held ownership in the house as late as the 1880s when Emily Funsten, the last child of Susan and David Funsten, reached her majority. The present owners acquired the house in 1937.

VDS/RCC

<sup>1</sup>Thomas D. Gold, History of Clarke County, Va., p. 49.

<sup>2</sup>Frederick County Will Book 13, p. 276.

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# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

Erin, Warren County, Virginia

CONTINUATION SHEET #2

ITEM NUMBER 9

PAGE 1

## 9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Land Tax Books 1836-1870.

Works Progress Administration, "Front Royal Historical Survey," September 24, 1936.  
Virginia State Library.

